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Notes

[Contributions in the form of notes or discussions should be sent to John A. Scott, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.]

THREE NOTES ON TACITUS' *AGRICOLA*

Cap. 19. 4: "Namque per ludibrium adsidere clausis horreis et emere ultro frumenta ac luere pretio cogebantur."

The reading *luere* (for the difficult, if not impossible, *ludere* of the later manuscripts) was first conjectured by Wex,[1] who, understanding some such object as *imperata*, took *luere pretio* in the sense of "to discharge their imposts with money."[2] The conjecture proved to be correct, being afterward found in the authoritative Jesi manuscript, the source of the whole extant tradition. His interpretation has also been widely received, appearing, for example, in two recent editions—Stuart's in 1909, and that of Hutton for the Loeb Library in 1914. Nevertheless, I cannot believe it to be right. In the first place it is a very un-Tacitean repetition of the idea of *emere frumenta*, and in the second place it seems to miss the whole point of the Roman oppression. In fact, on this interpretation, aside from *adsidere clausis horreis*, the sentence would contain no allusion to any oppressive measure. It was not oppressive to require those who had no corn to pay money instead; it would have been unfair not to do so. Nor was it a grievance that they did not receive the actual grain to be immediately redelivered, or (as Stuart remarks) that "the Romans kept both grain and money," as if, when a Briton paid for what he could not otherwise furnish, he would expect to receive the grain. Moreover, he did not literally buy what was in the granary, but by his payment enabled the Romans to obtain the amount of his share from other sources. In this transaction he is made to suffer through having the price fixed at an exorbitant rate. This is the point of *luere pretio;* the people were required (in a sense) to buy the grain and (*ac*= "what was worse") to expiate the act by paying at a very high price—a thing which constituted real oppression. For *luere* in this sense examples are hardly needed,[3] but what is notable here is the fact that it is used absolutely. It is by no means an isolated case. In the *Agricola* are the following instances; *transgressus* 18. 2; *agentem* 18. 5; *terruerat* 20. 5; *offendam* 22. 15; *transgressus* 24. 1; *reliquerunt* 32. 4; *timere* 32. 10; *metuentium* 34. 2; *relinquere* 38. 1; *interpretarentur* 40. 4. In the *Germania* I have noted *scrutatus est* 5. 3; *prohibuerunt* 10. 3; *agunt* 19. 2; *degunt* 20. 2. Doubtless other examples[1] could be found, but these are sufficient to show that the absolute use of *luere* illustrates an apparently unnoticed characteristic of Tacitus' style in the *Agricola* and the *Germania.*

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[1] *Prolegomena*, p. 80.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 81: "*ac* idem fere est quod sive vel potius (Sie mussten kaufen, das heisst mit Gelde büssen)."

[3] Cf. Cic. *Verr.* 1. 8; *Mil.* 36, 99; *Rep.* iii. 33; *Tusc.* v. 64; Verg. *Georg.* i. 502; *Aen.* i. 136; xi. 849; Tac.: *Hist.* ii. 54. 8; iii. 16. 23; *An.* xii. 54. 17; xiii. 21. 2; xiv. 10. 17; xv. 69. 16.

Cap. 30. 4: "Nos terrarum ac libertatis extremos recessus ipse ac sinus famae in hunc diem defendit; atque omne ignotum pro magnifico est."[2]

Sinus famae, the crux of this much-discussed passage, has fared variously at the hands of editors. In Wex it is "the protection of our fame"; in Orelli, "the remoteness of our abode" (*famae* being a dative); in Furneaux, "the remoteness of our glory"; in Gudeman, "the retired nook which only rumor reaches"; in Hutton, "the sequestered nook of story"; and in Stuart, "the privacy which cloaks our name." I wish to suggest another, and what seems to me a more probable interpretation, approaching the expression from the use of *sinus* in the sense of a strip of land projecting into the ocean or into alien lands. It is so used of Jutland,[3] of a part of the empire (*sinus imperii*) extending into German territory,[4] of a stretch of land from Syria to the Euphrates,[5] of the peninsula of Greece,[6] and, finally, of the portion of Scotland between the firths of Forth and Clyde on the north and the Solway and the Tweed on the south.[7] This is the *proprio sinus*, the whole of Caledonia being *sinus*—that is, the peninsula which Tacitus thought of as jutting out from Britain. The term, when brought into connection with *famae*, takes on an easily derived meaning, and we have what may be roughly translated as "the insularity of our fame." (We lack the word "peninsularity.") The phrase has the subtle implication that the fame of the Caledonians has the same conformation as their country and is coincident with it. There had been, then, two factors in their security—their geographical isolation and the fact that they were famous only among themselves. The very ignorance of the outside world was a protection, in that a certain glamor is cast over the unknown. "Situated on the confines of the earth and of liberty," says Calgacus, "we have been protected so far by our isolation and by the very insularity of our fame."

Cap. 31. 5: "nos integri et indomiti et in libertatem, non in paenitentiam laturi . . . . ostendamus, quos sibi Caledonia viros seaposuerit."

In this passage the editors have looked askance at *laturi*, though it is read by all the manuscripts, including the recently discovered E. Wex (early in the field and forgetting that Tacitus avoids the obvious) proposed *arma laturi;* Halm suggested *vindicaturi;* and Koch, *bellaturi.* Furneaux in the Oxford text prints *laturi* with a dagger, and is followed by Hutton in the Loeb edition, while Stuart goes back to the correction of Wex. It seems to me that the text is perfectly sound, and that *laturi* (like *luere* and the examples in note 1) is merely the absolute use of the verb. This, as we have seen, is a peculiarity of both the *Agricola* and the *Germania.* In an expression made familiar by countless repetitions the omission of *arma* would not cause misunderstanding, but would give a special color to this part of the sentence.

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[1] Cf. *tenuisse* Livy i. 1. 5 with *cursum* omitted.

[2] For brachyology in general see Gudeman, *Agricola*, p. xxxi, and *Germania*, p. lxviii.

[3] *Germania* 37. 1.

[4] *Ibid.* 29. 4.

[5] *An.* iv. 5. 4.

[6] Pliny *N.H.* iv. 1. 1.

[7] *Agricola* 23. 2.

JEFFERSON ELMORE
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY

ODYSSEUS DISGUISED AS AN AGED BEGGAR

Kirchhoff, in his *Die Homerische Odyssee,* laid great stress on the contradictions and inconsistencies involved in the miraculous aging of the hero through the purposes and power of Athena, and he tries to bring harmony into the story by assuming that the changes in Odysseus were natural changes and wholly due to the years and the hardships of his absence (p. 539): "So viel ist klar, die Unkenntlichkeit des Odysseus sei die natürliche und unvermeidliche Folge zunehmenden Alters nach langer Abwesenheit und der Mühsale einer langjährigen Irrfahrt."

We cannot be exact in numbering the years of Odysseus when he left as a part of the army bound for Troy, but they could not have been far from thirty, so that when he returned he must have been about fifty years of age.

The youth of Telemachus, the unfaded charms of Penelope, the continued life of his dog, and the reiterated mention of his return in the twentieth year fix the duration of his wanderings, so that all the direct as well as indirect proofs limit his wanderings to twenty years. The fact that his father, in spite of all his sorrows and hardships, was still alive shows that Odysseus on his return was a full generation from extreme old age, if indeed "extreme old age" could properly be applied to Laertes, who was even then able to do a good day's work in the orchard and to fell a foeman with his spear; while the nurse who had cared for Odysseus in his infancy was still an active member of the household.

The hardships which he was compelled to face were, no doubt, severe, but they were not of long duration, while the years spent with Circe and Calypso were free from aging sorrows or exhausting struggles, and even the years at Troy seem to have been far from strenuous.

The changes one undergoes in the twenty years from young manhood to middle age are ordinarily very small, if one is in good health, and Odysseus seems to have been free from sickness and to have had a most vigorous appetite. I have recently been at two reunions of college classes on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of graduation. Most of the members of these